

# Japanese innovation breeding quality felt at the fingertips

When it comes to Japanese innovation, perhaps companies in the lifestyle, textiles and musical instrument industries would not be the first to spring to mind. However, these firms – like their Japanese counterparts in high-tech industries such as automotives and electronics – place high value in intensive R&D in order to create products of the highest quality. Such dedication to innovation ensures they reign supreme over regional competitors that have emerged in recent decades offering cheaper, mass-produced products often lacking quality and originality.

"When compared to Chinese, Korean or Taiwanese manufacturers, I believe that Japanese manufacturers are much superior in terms of quality. These countries may be good at recreating something that already exists, but they are not as good at creating something new, which is something that Japanese firms excel at," says Takao Yagi, CEO of textiles firm Yagi & Co.

"I also believe that Japan is superior in terms of trust, inheritance and credibility compared to these countries. Japanese people are very earnest in their work and like to follow the *kaizen* philosophy of continual improvement. In terms of quality and sustainability, these countries cannot match Japan."

Spending as long as three years to develop a bath towel made from the highest-quality, ultra-thin yarn says a lot about luxury bath and bed wear maker UCHINO's commitment

to intensive product development. "It definitely comes down to quality in my mind. Japanese companies produce world-class quality products and consumers are seeking quality more than ever before," says president Nobuyuki Uchino, President of UCHINO, giving his take on Japan's edge over regional competition. "Here we have been developing products that use delicate materials, while making things at low cost. To make the high-quality materials that we have, we prioritize quality over productivity."

Three years was also the amount of time Sanyo spent on R&D to develop one of its reputed cotton swabs for the medical sector. The company uses innovative production methods to develop its cotton swabs for consumer, industrial and medical use, as explained by president Tsutomu Hibi. "Since we crush cotton into a tight state, we can make a variety of different types of buds and various shapes thanks to our production method."

"We focus on quality. We want to continuously improve our products," he adds. "People may think: 'Isn't that a bit extreme for cotton swabs?'. But thanks to our initiative and effort, we were able to come up with the HUBY and other industrial swabs that are indispensable to a number of sectors."

An integrated production system enabling everything to be done in-house is the source of cosmetics container manufacturer Hidan's competitive advantage. "This strength of our

company enables us to achieve low cost, quick delivery, and stable quality, which sets us apart from our competitors. Moreover, because Hidan manufactures in-house, we are able to provide simple yet tailor-made solutions to our customers," says president Hideo Matsunuma. "Meeting ever-changing customer needs is one of our veritable strengths. Only a company with an integrated system like Hidan, can always think from the customer's perspective and respond flexibly to their needs."

Harmoniously combining innovative production with traditional craftsmanship, Kawai builds some of the world's finest acoustic and electric pianos, something for which top pianists around the world can vouch. "Abiding by our policy that pianos can be continually improved, we have been researching the design and material of each part that functions best within a piano. For example, we use state-of-the-art ABS Carbon components for faster repetition and better control," says Hirotaka Kawai, Chairman, President and CEO of Kawai. "In production, we use machines for the initial stages and then skillful technicians to assemble and make adjustments. Our factory embodies the perfect marriage of advanced technology and hand-craftsmanship."

From textile makers to piano manufacturers, Japanese innovation breeds quality and craftsmanship that can be literally felt at the fingertips.

## Leveraging leading-edge tech for business growth

An SME that has cultivated unique technologies in the field of textiles, Marui Orimono is ready to carry these assets into the global market.



"We're looking for partners to expand our overseas sales channels."

**Toru Miyamoto,**  
Chairman (CEO),  
Marui Orimono Co., Ltd.

Founded in 1937, Marui Orimono is a Japanese SME that specializes in manufacturing cutting-edge textiles for clothing – while its growing business focus also includes industrial materials and IT.

At its production sites, the firm harnesses state-of-the-art technology – such as automation, IoT and virtual product development

tools – in the process of creating fabrics used by a range of major apparel companies.



Japan's largest textile factory

As the fashion industry seeks to reduce its environmental impact, Marui Orimono is committed to working towards the U.N.'s Sustainable Development Goals. It's a drive that has led the company to introduce NOTO QUALITY, a brand of durable, waste-reducing textiles that boasts Global Recycle Standard certification.

"The trend in fashion has been changing," says Toru Miyamoto, Marui Orimono's chairman (CEO). "Fashion has shifted from following trends to matching individual lifestyles and values. We're

dedicated to making our business much more sustainable by offering personalized service and *monozukuri* (manufacturing) with environmentally friendly materials."

In the company's industrial materials division, meanwhile, a particularly big seller among its portfolio of leading-edge products is its lightweight, high-strength carbon-fiber fabric, whose uses include reinforcing buildings and bridges. "Our carbon-fiber fabric for automotives is especially unique," Mr. Miyamoto adds.



IoT-based manufacturing

In 2015, Marui Orimono created its IT division, which has a wide-ranging focus. "Some of its



85 years in Noto, a textile production area

businesses are related to textiles, while others are not related at all," Mr. Miyamoto explains. Among the firm's numerous IT projects are Up-T, a portal site where anyone can sell or buy their own designs, and Michi Nail - an e-commerce site where users can buy nail tips handmade by professional nail artists.

As Marui Orimono seeks to expand globally by establishing sales offices in North America, Europe and China, the company's efforts to strengthen its e-commerce capabilities are integral to its international objectives. "We're aiming to launch an online platform in South Korea and Taiwan next year," Mr. Miyamoto notes, for example.

 **MARUI ORIMONO**  
www.marui.co.jp

# UCHINO looking to enhance the sensory experience

Providing the softest and highest-quality towels and apparel, UCHINO's products offer a relaxing experience while enhancing the human senses.

A manufacturer and distributor of home textile products, UCHINO is an internationally renowned company which was first established almost 80 years ago.

Company president Nobuyuki Uchino makes no secret of how the group has been able to maintain its market superiority despite the rise of regional manufacturers and accompanying price competition.

"The big difference between our garments and those of competitors is that we make the materials first and then decide what to do with them," he says. "Other competitors are searching for ways to make things productively. We, on the other hand, prioritize quality over productivity."

It is an approach that has enabled the company to achieve market success both domestically and abroad.

Of the company's various brands, one of the most recent to appear is UCHINO relax, which offers specialized comfort and whose range has just expanded from towels to shirts and pajamas.



Towel caps

Mr. Uchino adds: "The brand itself relies on feeling very light-weight and is achieved from an original gauze we have named Marshmallow Gauze because of its exceptionally soft texture. The idea was to create a brand that conjures the feeling after taking a bath"

Patented worldwide, Marshmallow Gauze is contoured,



UCHINO relax

meaning it does not come into direct contact with the skin, which makes it suitable for those with sensitive skin.

The company's current best-seller, meanwhile, is the so-called Blissful Towel, which, Mr. Uchino confirms, spent some three years in development, and features softer yarn that is seven times as thin as that generally used in the United States.

The market for soft comfort wear is growing in Japan, partly, no doubt, in response to the Covid pandemic and the trend for remote working.

Mr. Uchino, however, has another theory. "People buy the Blissful Towel not just for the function, but also for the sensory feeling that comes from using it. You could say that the products we offer are more like lifestyle choices. Certainly, the idea with the Blissful Towel, a term we have now registered, was to convey to our customers

that when they use our products, they will feel happy."

Turning to sustainability, Mr. Uchino outlines how the company is aiming to switch to 100% sustainable cotton, and is keen to emphasize some other ways in which UCHINO gives something back to society.

"Other products I would like to highlight include our hat towels, which are often used by chemotherapy patients," he states.

With towels in the U.S. being too thick to make hats, UCHINO has begun donating its products to organizations such as the Iwate Hospice Association in order to provide extra comfort for cancer patients. A noble undertaking, which has seen towel caps being delivered to patients all over the world.

Looking to the future, Mr. Uchino cites the need for the company to apply itself on a more global scale. It is worth noting in this regard that the



Blissful towel



"Something I would like to do in the future is expand further on the five senses. Ideally, we would like to create a one-stop solution for relaxation."

Nobuyuki Uchino,  
President,  
UCHINO Co., Ltd.



company has already enjoyed great success in Asian countries, where sales are apparently highest for UCHINO's most expensive items.

And Mr. Uchino is confident that the company's success in Asian countries can be replicated elsewhere: "I do not think there is another company that can imitate us, especially in terms of manufacturing."

"The approach now," he confirms, "is to look at the markets we want to target with our material, and perhaps consider a collaboration with companies that are strong in those target markets. One particular market we are interested in currently is skin care."

With an established presence in global department stores, a move into e-commerce is also planned in the near future.

All developments at UCHINO start and end with the keywords "light" and "soft," providing an antidote to digitalization in an increasingly fast-paced world. Even in the face of society's modernization, there will always be a time and place for comfort and relaxation. "That," Mr. Uchino concludes, "is what the UCHINO brand stands for, and it is my mission to expand upon that."

# Yagi's various brands set to go global

Since it was founded in 1893, Yagi & Co. has established itself as a go-to fiber trader and manufacturer. As it looks to the future, the company's focus is on international expansion and its social contribution.



"The goal was to differentiate ourselves from other companies, so by creating all these brands we can play on our strengths and stand out from the crowd."

Takao Yagi,  
CEO, Yagi & Co., Ltd.

Boasting nearly 130 years of experience, the Japanese company Yagi & Co. is a fiber trader and manufacturer that caters to clients in both the domestic and international markets, with a network of branches and subsidiaries spanning several countries.



Rooftop solar panels at TSUBAME TOWEL Co., Ltd.

Following its founding principle 'dependability first', Yagi supplies high-quality raw materials to textiles producers, as well as providing expertly-made textiles and apparel to clothing makers and retailers. A company with a growing portfolio of original brands, Yagi also has a lifestyle section that creates items such as curtains, rugs and sheets, under the slogan 'making life more comfortable'. What's more, the firm is always on the lookout for new directions in which to take its wide range of products: Yagi has a dedicated department that focuses on seeking out opportunities in fresh business areas.

To that end, customers can use Yagi's e-commerce platform, Fably, to order standard and bespoke products created both by the company and a host of other suppliers.

By placing their trust in Japanese manufacturing, says Yagi CEO Takao Yagi, clients are rewarded with top-quality, innovative products. "When compared

are said to reflect their people, so talent acquisition is very important to us," Mr. Yagi says. "To boost recruitment and training, we've leveraged the power of IT and have outsourced and brought in external experts for our HR department, for example. We've focused on strengthening our management: we've developed management training and we're



Textile e-commerce platform Fably

to Chinese, Korean or Taiwanese manufacturers, I believe Japanese companies are far superior in terms of quality," Mr. Yagi says. "And these countries may be good at recreating something that already exists, but they aren't as good at creating something new, which is something Japanese firms excel at. I also believe Japan is superior in terms of trust, inheritance and credibility. Japanese people are very earnest in their work and the Japanese like to follow the *kaizen* philosophy of continual improvement."



Ethical textile series Forethica

However, Japan's aging and declining population represents a challenge to the country's businesses, who have less young talent to recruit – and Yagi is taking steps to mitigate the effects of this trend. "Trading companies

educating the next generation of our leaders and executives."

As it looks to the future, Yagi has also sought ways in which it can stand out from its competitors. One is the creation of raw material brands such as Unito Organic, which produces quality organic cotton that is GOTS (Global Organic Textile Standard) certified. "In order to add the kind of additional value that customers are looking for, we have to do something special," Mr. Yagi says. "By adding value and developing the brands, we're able to push ourselves ahead."

Together with other projects such as Yagi's ethical textile series Forethica, Unito Organic meets the company's firm commitment to reducing its environmental impact, too. A further example of this drive is Recycolor, an eco-friendly recycled yarn product that is GRS (Global Recycled Standard) certified. "Cut waste and scraps of material generated during the apparel production process are collected, sorted by color and the recovered fibers are reborn as yarn," Mr. Yagi explains. "Recycolor enables many different colors of cotton fabrics to be recycled. Moreover, both water



TATRAS showroom in Italy

consumption and greenhouse gas emissions are reduced because no dyeing process is required."

Yagi is also harnessing DX to contribute to a greener future. "We're looking into digital technologies like 3D computer graphics, and as a company we're investing capital into this technology," Mr. Yagi says. "What happens in the textile industry is that we produce a lot of prototypes and samples, and all of those get thrown away. Using digital technologies, we can forgo that entire stage."



YAGI presentation at "Fashion World 2022" in Tokyo

Yagi's environmental commitment goes hand in hand with an increasing prioritization of overseas business. "We're focused on the idea of sustainability brands leading our expansion globally; we want to move away from the domestic market," Mr. Yagi notes. Furthermore, the firm's eco focus speaks to a desire to make a lasting social impact. "We already have a very clear vision set for the company," he says. "We're not looking into stretching our financial goals necessarily, because our path is quite clear. What's more important for us is our legacy, and how much we can contribute to society."

# Hidan: Leader in cosmetic containers takes action for the future

Manufacturing a large majority of Shiseido's lipstick containers, Hidan aims to reach new heights in order to suit developing market needs.



"Name any major cosmetics company and there is a good chance that we deliver to them."

Hideo Matsunuma,  
President, Hidan Co., Ltd.

First established more than 70 years ago, Hidan is a cosmetic container manufacturer with an established international presence whose products are available not only in Japan and Asia, but also Europe and the United States.

Something of an industry pioneer, the company was one of the first to build and operate a production site in China in the early 90s because of fierce price competition in Japan.

Company president Hideo Matsunuma looks back on the decision in the following terms: "Our strategy was to lower the overall price of our products in order to

meet global costs by localizing production sites in China, where labor costs are lower, and thus expand our business worldwide."

While Mr. Matsunuma admits it hasn't always been plain sailing, Japan's rapidly shrinking population and deepening labor crisis means setting up a Chinese base has proved an increasingly shrewd move.

One way to tackle the challenges presented by Japan's demographic shift is through increased automation. Mr. Matsunuma picks up the thread: "Hidan has increased its production efficiency, so that we only need one person for an operation that used to be carried out by ten. We



are striving every day to achieve both semi- and full automation."

The proposed shift to automation comes with a presidential note of caution, however: "Machines cannot easily replace the work of the excellent *human* resources we have nurtured over the years."

Development of an integrated production system is one of Hidan's key initiatives, enabling the company, in the words of Mr. Matsunuma, to "provide simple

yet tailor-made solutions" for its customers. Indeed, "only a company with an integrated system like ours can always think from the customer's perspective and respond flexibly to their ever-changing needs."

And make no mistake, Hidan has a lot of customers. Mr. Matsunuma adds: "The products we offer include some of the best-selling products that you all know and love; we supply containers for almost all national and international lipstick manufacturers, and also have experience in other containers besides lipsticks, such as metal compacts for foundations, jars, bottle caps and other products."

Elsewhere, Mr. Matsunuma is keen to emphasize the company's environmental credentials. "Our ultimate goal," he states, "is to use 100% recyclable materials, which means that the next generation of lipstick containers will be made of 100% aluminum. We want to create a product that allows consumers to reuse their containers once they use up their lipstick."



Looking to the future, Mr. Matsunuma highlights the company's willingness to cooperate with outside parties: "We welcome co-creation in the sense of collaborating with our clients in terms of development and other activities."

He is also considering expansion into overseas markets and local production, outside of Japan and China, with Southeast Asia as one of the options due to its geographical proximity and increased presence in the global market.

The company's experience in China, meanwhile, stands it in good stead when it comes to conducting local production overseas.



"It is important," Mr. Matsunuma says, "for local production sites to understand Hidan customer's expectations." Key to a successful partnership is not necessarily business acumen alone, but the ability to communicate and maintain good relationships with local employees.

2023 could be the year that the cosmetics industry finally recovers from the negative impact of the global pandemic. To this end, Mr. Matsunuma confirms that Hidan is looking to diversify its line-up by "introducing new products that transcend the image we have had in the past."

As for its customer portfolio, Hidan's range of contacts is already extensive: "Name any major cosmetics company," Mr. Matsunuma says, "and there is a good chance that we deliver to them."

Expressing satisfaction with the company's customer portfolio doesn't mean there is no plan, however. In fact, the company is in the process of developing a mid-term strategy plan, which, Mr. Matsunuma states, will most likely be implemented by the next generation of Hidan employees. It includes sales, increasing production capacity, and the development of new containers, and emphasizes the need for the company to remain flexible and adapt to changes in the business environment.

If successful, the combined force of such efforts will only serve to make the company more profitable in the long run.



**HIDAN CO., LTD.**

<https://hidan.co.jp>



Hidan Tokyo Head Office Showroom

# Handmade crafts bringing happiness around the world

Being in contact with customers and listening to feedback has allowed Clover to evolve its products and services, which have become well loved by many consumers both inside and outside of Japan.

As a manufacturer of handicrafts, Clover proudly offers a wide range of knitting, sewing, patchwork quilting,



Wonder clips

and DIY tools that appeal to everyone, from beginners to experts.

"From the perspective of the handicraft industry in which we find ourselves, we hope that many people continue to enjoy making crafts. Our company operates under the corporate philosophy of 'making people around the world happy through handmade crafts,'" says Tomoki Okada, President of Clover. "We hope to enrich lives not

only by making tools and materials for the enjoyment of handmade crafts, but also by providing information through our workshops, website, and social media sites."

Today, the handicraft market is a growing segment, with many people seeking relaxing activities as



Wonder clips variety pack

a means to escape the hustle and bustle of everyday life. And Clover is taking various measures to appeal to a more diverse range of people in order to be a part of this growing market.

"There are three important strategies here, one of them is to appeal

Desk needle threader



to young people. We are trying to make our designs and products more attractive for them. We use social media sites such as Instagram to promote products that look and feel appealing to the younger generation," says Mr. Okada. "Second, we would like to expand the scope of the handmade crafts we work with, and develop and sell DIY-related products, etc., as well as existing categories, in an effort to bring the enjoyment of handicraft products to



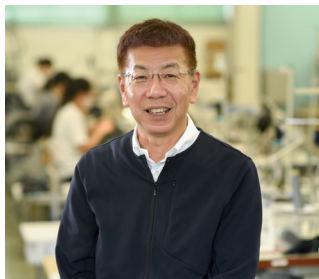
"We are able to share the joy of handicrafts by giving people the opportunity to come into direct contact with handmade crafts."

Tomoki Okada, President, CLOVER MFG. CO., LTD.

as many people as possible. Third, in order to increase opportunities for people to come into contact with handicrafts, we exhibit at many events around the world where many consumers gather, including in Japan, the U.S., Europe and Asia."



# High-quality textiles that meet the highest Japanese standards



"We consider this ability to mix different types of yarn as being one of the core competencies which differentiate us from other producers."

Yasuo Atago, President, Atago and Co., Ltd.

When it comes to clothing, no matter the product, comfort as well as appearance are most important, and that's certainly the philosophy for apparel and

An appreciation of the finer things in life is the thinking behind Atago's Nobiluz brand and just like its fabrics the Fukui-headquartered firm is looking to 'stretch and grow' its presence internationally.



textiles company Atago and Co., which was established almost a hundred years ago.

"When we produced a certain kind of mask, for example, we tried to make a product that was comfortable to wear with the fine adjustment of the length of the ear strap," explains company president Yasuo Atago. "Materials stretch differently, so small

cutting adjustments are needed to make comfortable products."

As well as utilizing plants in Japan and China effectively, key to the company's success has been differentiation.

"We didn't want to produce the same thing as our major competitors," says Mr. Atago. "They mass produced standard white inner wear so we turned

our focus to some niche fields such as wellness wear, outdoor wear and even clothes that can help with recovery from fatigue.

"We expect our wellness and recovery wear, in particular, to be popular in overseas markets."

With dreams of launching some B2C business on an e-commerce platform and also plans to enter the U.S. and European markets, another objective is clear.

"We'd like to grow sales of our innovative stretch material brand Nobiluz, which literally means 'to stretch and grow', initially domestically and then across China."



# Quality swabs for the medical sector, tech industry, and more

Taking advantage of its unique technology, Sanyo provides high-quality cotton products for a wide range of applications.

Since 1967, the Japanese company Sanyo has developed into a market-leading manufacturer of cotton swabs for general, medical and industrial applications – and the range of uses for its high-quality products is expanding beyond these fields, too. A firm that boasts a 40% market share in Japan, Osaka-based Sanyo also has a growing presence overseas; indeed, 30% of its sales now come from exports.

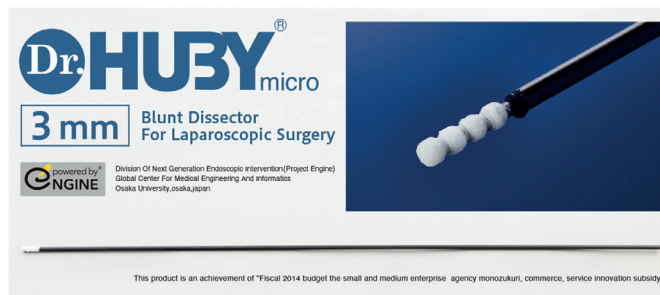
Sanyo is defined by its quality commitment, says president Tsutomu Hibi. "One might look at our product and say, 'it's only a cotton swab', but our mission is to pursue the ultimate ideal of a cotton swab," he declares. "When we created the machine for producing our swabs, we went beyond the level of quality



Variety of series of cotton buds

typical of the low-mix, high-production style of Swiss or Italian machines. They tear away the cotton and wrap it around a stick, but our method is fundamentally different. We compress the cotton into a very tight state, allowing us to make many different types of buds: small, extra-large, pointed, etc. We focus on quality. We want to make better and better products."

Customers notice the difference when using Sanyo's cotton swabs, Mr. Hibi says: "We ground the top of the stem into a rounded shape because some people say that if it's pointed, it hurts their



Laparoscopic surgery cotton swab

ears. The cotton is wrapped very softly, and the stem is harder than ordinary ones. The cotton never comes off the stem. With cheaper Chinese products, it may come off and be left in your ear."

Aside from Sanyo's extensive portfolio of cotton swabs for general uses such as aural hygiene, the company's HUBY industrial swabs have become indispensable in a number of sectors. For example, they are an important cleaning implement used by computer and smartphone makers, as well as car manufacturers. In the medical sphere, meanwhile, the HUBY-COTIX medical assistance swab is used by healthcare professionals in areas including ENT (ears, nose and throat) and gynecology.

Sanyo's medical products also feature the Dr. HUBY®micro, a tool for laparoscopic surgery that was developed in collaboration with Osaka University. "One day, Professor Nakajima



HUBY - cotton swab for industrial use

– a famous doctor at Osaka University Hospital – showed me a surgical implement with a cotton tip that's five milli-

meters in diameter," Mr. Hibi recalls. "He mentioned that in some cases if you make a big hole, the patient will be left with a big scar and stitches are necessary. He wanted to use a three-millimeter tip instead. At that size, you can just use a bandage right after surgery."



Specimen collection swab

By leveraging technologies we fostered in the invention of the industrial cotton swab, what we came up with was the Dr. HUBY®micro. The cotton itself is very small and is shaped like a dumpling, so it won't be left in the abdominal cavity. There's no fluffiness, so even minute fibers won't be left behind."

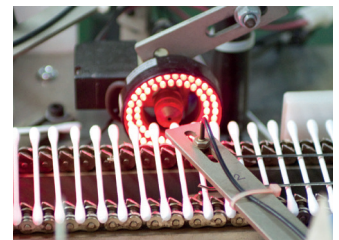
Sanyo's efforts in the development of medical products have also led it to create a swab whose scope of use has moved beyond the firm's three main business areas. Initially introduced as a tool for COVID-19 testing, the HUBY-COTIX specimen collection swab has come to be applied to many other kinds of tests, Mr. Hibi notes: "For instance, it can be used by the police to check whether a person has been drinking alcohol."



"When it comes to cotton swabs, it's Sanyo."

Tsutomu Hibi,  
President, Sanyo Co., Ltd.

As Sanyo looks to expand not only its portfolio of cotton swabs but also its global reach, the company is targeting growth in Asia, Europe and the United States – albeit there are different priorities for different regions. In the general-use market, for example, the focus is on Asia. "At an exhibition in the U.S. in 2015," Mr. Hibi remembers, "general consumers visiting our booth said, 'Why do you do that much with just cotton swabs? You just clean your ears and throw them away, right? Why do you work so hard to make them perfect?' In Asia, on the other hand, there are more people interested in having high-quality products of this kind. By the time



Secured production with CCD camera

of our 60th anniversary in 2027, I'd like to have achieved double-digit growth of our market share in Asian countries."

# TMT Machinery: The one and only technology

Aiming to be the industry leader, TMT Machinery continues to provide the world's highest quality products and services in synthetic fiber.

With over 50 years experience providing leading-edge technology in synthetic fiber machinery across R&D, engineering, manufacturing, sales and after-sales service, TMT Machinery strives to be the leader in the industry.



POY Take-up System / Eco-ORCA

"We aim to be the world's No. 1 company in both name and reality," explains company president Ryuji Takamoto, "by listening to our customers and embodying their opinions in our products to develop and contribute to the global apparel industry."

This continued effort to be the best is seen as a reason each TMT employee can feel pride.



FDY Take-up System / iBox-MANTA

"Our motto is to enrich lives and livelihoods around the world by proposing and providing textile and industrial synthetic fiber based on the strength of our company's product development, technology, manufacturing and after-sales service capabilities," says Mr. Takamoto.

TMT Machinery is constantly looking for ways to innovate to

meet its objectives as the president explains.

"From the advanced and varied yarns produced, to the integrated spinning system, high-speed take-up winders, processing machines and elemental technology, TMT provides solutions to a diverse range of customer-specific needs.

"Taking advantage of the technology and experience accumulated over



False-Twisting / ATF-1500



"Our goal is to contribute to apparel industries and the industrial synthetic fiber market to make people's lives better."

Ryuji Takamoto, President, TMT Machinery, Inc.

the years, we are moving forward with the automation of yarn production factories, while expanding our global service network."

**tmt** TMT MACHINERY, INC.  
www.tmt-mc.jp

# Kawai: Continuing to pursue perfection in piano manufacturing

From its 'Workshop in the Woods', Kawai's Master Piano Artisans combine new technologies and traditional craftsmanship to ensure flawless results.

"Over the course of our history, the KAWAI brand has earned the unwavering trust of music lovers around the world."

Hiroataka Kawai, President, Kawai Musical Instruments Manufacturing Co., Ltd.

Music, the highest of fine arts, is the sound of the soul. Music transcends the ages and communicates to the heart. With that philosophy firmly in mind, Koichi Kawai, the founder of Kawai Musical Instruments Manufacturing, dreamed of building the world's finest piano when he established the company in 1927. Today, after a long history of technical innovations and quality craftsmanship, his dream has come true, with the company bringing learners and

accomplished pianists the world over the highest quality pianos.

"What we try to do at Kawai is combine modern machinery with craftsmanship," says Hiroataka Kawai, Chairman, President and CEO. "We have retained the traditional way of making pianos. Still, with the flow of time, machinery has been introduced and those things have been combined with the handcrafted aspect of our manufacturing. This has become



MPA preparing the full concert grand piano "SK-EX"

the precedent to make our Ryuyo Grand Piano Factory possible to-

day. Our second president established this factory, nicknaming it the 'workshop in the woods.'



Alexander Gadjiev, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize/best performance of a sonata

Headquartered in Hamamatsu, Shizuoka, Japan, Kawai is best known for its grand pianos, upright pianos, digital pianos and hybrid pianos. However, it is the Shigeru Kawai series of pianos, named after its former president, that has taken plaudits and won awards internationally, including the



Kawai's "Workshop in the Woods" factory, established 1980

famous Chopin International Piano Competition.

"The process of making Shigeru Kawai is separated from other pianos. It comes from the knowledge and techniques from master piano making experts. Moreover, we only allow our certified technicians called Master Piano Artisans (MPA) to complete the final adjustments to this beautiful instrument."

**KAWAI**  
THE FUTURE OF THE PIANO  
www.kawai-global.com